

TDC-Board of Directors  
Thursday, March 3, 2016  
BOCC Board Room  
Milton, Florida

**Board Members present:**

Vernon Compton  
Alan Lowery  
Norm Crowder  
Kyle Holley  
Jack Sanborn  
Liz Horton  
Rob Williamson

**Attendees:**

Shannon Ogletree  
Nicole Dees  
Meridith South  
Al Wilson  
Brandy Kea  
Yvonne Harper  
Bob Miller  
Debbie Peaden

8:30 a.m. Call to Order – Vernon Compton

**Compton moved approval of the agenda as amended.**

**Williamson moved approval without objection of the January 7, 2016 (amended) minutes.**

**Williamson moved approval without objection of the February 4, 2016 minutes**

Discussion of FY 16/17 Aid to Private Organization opening of Grant Cycle on April 1, 2016 closing May 31, 2016

Dees said this gives the reoccurring grantees the opportunity to market ahead of time, during the summer months, when there are more visitors in the county. She said the grant process, as a whole, has been very successful. Dees said each grantee, so far, has been above and beyond the requirements when it comes to post event packets.

Holley said the purpose of the timing, is well in advance of the county budgeting process so the overall transparency is improved with the grant cycle.

Discussion of policy of accepting aid to private organization grants out of policy guidelines

Holley said this item refers to having flexibility in the budget to accommodate a new or unexpected event that the TDC may want to recommend to the Board of Commissioners.

Navarre Beach Turtle Conservation Center (NBSTCC) Letter of Intent to Reallocate Funds

Compton said in the board's packet, there is an outline of a request for change of a portion of the \$43,915.00 that was approved to go to the Navarre Beach Turtle Conservation Center and Marine Sanctuary.

Yvonne Harper gave an update regarding the status of the Navarre Beach Turtle Conservation Center. She said the Center is having programs on Saturdays throughout March. Harper said the Center is ready but waiting on permits from the FWC (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission).

**Williamson moved approval without objection.**

Discussion-Airbnb Tax Collection

Bob Miller (Finance Department) gave an update to the board regarding two conference calls he participated in last week on the subject of the Airbnb tax collection and the language of a potential, draft copy of an agreement. He said he feels his concerns have been addressed by Airbnb and thinks this sounds like a good idea. Miller said he is going to discuss this with the clerk and see if something can be worked out.

Compton asked Miller to bring back a more formal recommendation to the TDC board after his discussion with the Clerk of Court.

Sanborn asked if people who have a home or space for rent, have to register with the state for sales tax. Miller said people that have a home they are renting out, are responsible for both the tourist tax and the sales tax.

Discussion Gulf Breeze Taxes

Compton said the northend committee made a recommendation for consideration of the Gulf Breeze funds following the same process as the remainder of the county. He said the southend committee's recommendation was to continue with the process as it is now.

Sanborn said one reason the northend committee feels Gulf Breeze should be involved in the county is because one of the seats on the TDC is a Gulf Breeze councilman seat. He said Gulf Breeze has not shown up in years because there is no need for them to. Sanborn said he feels it is important because Gulf Breeze's dollars could be leveraged for the whole county instead of just being used to promote Gulf Breeze.

Horton said the southend committees thought was that things are being appropriately handled and that "rocking the boat" might not be the best thing.

Crowder said it seems in the past Gulf Breeze has done a good job with keeping the city up and making it beautiful. She said to "rock the boat" at this point maybe the wrong thing to do.

Lowery said at the northend committee meeting, it was brought up whether or not it was even legal for the City of Gulf Breeze to have done this to begin with. He said he thinks it would take a special act from the Board of Commissioners in order for this to be legal and he is not sure if this took place.

Compton said this moved through the Clerk of Courts related to the process and an interpretation of what was required by law.

Williamson said being a recognized municipality in the state of Florida; it would be Gulf Breeze's choice if they wanted to create their own tourism committee. He said it is not illegal for them to have a group of citizens that want to meet to discuss tourism. Williamson said it does not impact the decision of this board. Lowery said he is talking about Gulf Breeze getting its own bed tax dollars. He said that has to come through the county.

Sanborn said to just give a large sum of money to another municipality or another organization without the oversight that the TDC provides, puts "us" in a precarious situation.

Williamson said there are ways to go about getting that accountability. He said he has a great amount of respect for the people in the City of Gulf Breeze and those that have been in a position of leadership there for a number of years. Williamson said the City of Gulf Breeze asked for a meeting to discuss this issue and the meeting was denied, and then subsequently charges were filed with the state attorney's office, that have since been dismissed. He said he has been pretty vocal that he does not think this was the best way to go about it. Williamson further discussed a meeting he had with the City of Gulf Breeze on a way going forward. He said to provide more structure and accountability to these funds; an Interlocal Agreement has been created.

Compton said the main point of discussion from the northend committee, was about the level of process and transparency and to make sure the TDC represents the entire county.

Sanborn said the TDC has a vacant seat and by law it should be filled with any municipality. He said in theory someone from the Jay's council would be the next person to take that seat.

Holley said there was concern about not getting into a situation where the TDC Board is vulnerable by not having oversight on the expenditure of the dollars. He said he feels an Interlocal Agreement is great, as long as the Budget Department feels they have the control they need.

Sanborn said rather than uniting the county, this agreement keeps a division in the county.

Williamson said the intent of the Interlocal Agreement was to add some structure.

Holley said the TDC needs a representative from Gulf Breeze to share what their events are and how successful they are, so that as a team the TDC can advocate for allocations for advertising to increase the community impact for the region.

Williamson said after reviewing the Interlocal Agreement, he would ask that this board consider, individually, emailing and voicing support of the agreement, ahead of Monday's commission committee meeting.

### FL Sports Foundation Grant

Dees said in early January, the TDC applied to the Florida Sports Foundation for a grant to aid in the advertising for the Tough Mudder event coming up in April. She said the TDC was awarded \$12,000.00. Dees said staff will need approval from this board to accept this agreement and then the agreement will go to the Board of County Commission for approval.

Holley said the county's advertising agency will spend \$12,000.00 of existing dollars in the marketing plan to meet the requirement and then if the economic impact meets the Florida Sports Foundation requirements, then the county is reimbursed \$12,000.00. He said he wants people to know that the Florida Sports Foundation grant cycle is something that the county has never had access to before. Holley said now the county is an industry partner so any event within the county has direct access to these funds.

Williamson further discussed differences between this years and last year's Tough Mudder contract.

There was further discussion regarding local business offering discounts to Tough Mudder participants at the time of package pickup.

Sanborn said there will be the opportunity for the Tourist Development Council to promote local business specials and specific events, at the TDC hospitality tent.

**Crowder made a motion to recommend Morgan move forward with an allocation of funds to support the welcoming events for Tough Mudder. Horton seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Holley abstained.**

**Williamson moved approval without objection in support of the \$12,000.00 Florida Sports Foundation grant agreement.**

### Tough Mudder Community Support Agreement

Compton said there is a copy of this agreement in the board's packet.

Holley said under this agreement, Tough Mudder is obligated to host a pre-party. Williamson said he will follow-up on this.

### Discussion – Tough Mudder Promotion Booth Shift Schedule/Trip give aways/Tent Set Up (City Milton)/Tent Banner

Nicole Dees thanked everyone that has volunteered to help represent Santa Rosa County at the booth. She thanked the City of Milton for providing a tent and tables.

Compton said one of the boards important items will be working with staff regarding the information provided at the promotion booth. He said there will be thousands of people going by the TDC's booth. Compton said this is a great chance to market what Santa Rosa County has to

offer. He said in order to do this TDC needs to get as much information as possible from businesses and events for the booth.

#### DSBP Update

South said she thinks the “lunch and learn” this past month was very successful. She said she appreciates everyone that was able to attend. South said an industry partner newsletter will be released next week and she is hoping this will help in receiving more information. South said in the newsletter there will be links to the digital presentations. She said she is excited that the Board of Commissioners approved the RUF study. South said she has set the date to gather all information by the end of April. She further discussed the Florida’s Playground blog page and the homeschool spring break page.

South said Google analytical traffic was up to 28,000 visitors this month. She said last year this number was less than 20,000 in February.

#### Tourist Development Office Trade Show Update

Dees discussed a document listing the current trade shows and summits that TDC staff has attended and are going to attend.

Sanborn asked Dees if the 28<sup>th</sup> annual travel extravaganza was Ft. Rucker. Dees said yes.

Williamson said he recommends that staff include a recap, even if is quarterly, to let the board know what staff is bringing back from these conferences in the way of relationships built and continuing education. He said this will be to make sure the return on investment can be explained to make sure this board’s fiduciary responsibility is met. Williamson said he would like to see this at the next meeting.

#### Lodging Tax Update

Dees said there was a 21.20% increase in lodging tax from last January.

Williamson said in relation to the BP money, the county increased its marketing and advertising budget by approximately \$500,000.00 for three consecutive years. He said his concern is what will happen when this money runs out and how the county is going to be able to keep in those markets, that it has made inroads into. Williamson said he feels this board is going to have to have discussions of increasing the amount of advertising dollars, as a portion of the budget. He said this is the best year in bed tax collections that this county has ever had. Williamson said TDC is going to need to look at increasing the advertising spending.

#### North End requests

None

### South End requests

None

Other Business:

### Outdoor Display Turtle injury and mishap insurance

Dees read aloud an email from DeVann Cook (Human Resources Director/Risk Manager) stating that if the outdoor display is purchased with county funds and owned and maintained by the county, it will be covered by insurance.

### Update on Beach Beautification Committee (BBC)

Horton said members of the BBC attended the TDC southend committee meeting on Tuesday. She said the BBC thanked the southend committee for its time, consideration and assistance. Horton said the BBC has now disbanded. She said the southend committee had a list of things that the BBC took care of and did. Horton said moving forward, she would like to know the plan of transition, the timeline of getting things done and the reason the free help disbanded.

Williamson said the BBC was not disbanded by any recommendation or decision of the Board of Commissioners; they did that on their own accord. He said he had a meeting with BBC, the president of the Navarre Beach Leaseholders Association, chairman of the Christmas in the Park from the Navarre Chamber and with Morgan. Williamson said he asked the BBC to provide a list of improvements that they would like to see in Navarre Beach area, any associated costs with those and then to prioritize them. He said the idea was that he would be having meetings with all of the stakeholders to try to provide a more consolidated effort in providing additional beautification and to provide enhanced service levels. Williamson said if the county is going to provide a world class experience it cannot do this with a “rag tag” group of volunteers. He said he told the BBC he wants to take the great foundation they built and the great work they have done and build and improve upon it. Williamson said he had raised some concerns that there were private citizens negotiating an administering a contract with a vendor and he thinks this could expose the county to risks. He said there are private citizens putting permanent improvements in Santa Rosa County right of way, without prior approval, and he does not think that is consistent. Williamson said personally he likes the work the BBC has done, but he does not get to pick and choose the level of accountability among different groups. He said he had hoped to partner with the BBC on looking to improve the service levels. Williamson said he has a meeting 10:45 a.m. today with the Navarre Beach committee to better outline what the service levels are going to be on the beach. He said after today’s meeting he imagines that within the next week or two, that anything that the BBC was taking care of, that county staff will take care of.

### 850 Tourism Edition Magazine

Williamson said there will be a Santa Rosa County business spotlight in the April/May edition of 850 Magazine. He said if any business owners are interested, he can get them additional information.

### Update on BP

Williamson discussed legislature's recent decision regarding the BP funds. He said he thinks the concern is that the legislature has said they are going to put this money into the general fund and discuss how it will be allocated in the next 2017 session. Williamson said his concern is that this could be the attempt to defer these funds to the general fund for them to be redistributed throughout the 67 counties in the state.

Horton said she is in support of the TDC having a delegate go to Tallahassee. She said she is in favor for the message to be, that those funds be put somewhere separate so that they are very visible.

There was further discussion regarding BP funding.

### Update on planning session Request For Qualifications (RFQ)

Ogletree said the request was approved by Board of Commissioners and this has been advertised. He said the RFQ is due by March 22, 2016.

### State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Holley said the Department of Environmental Protection maintains a State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. He said he wants to make sure that the county is advocating, through staff, for inclusion at every level. Holley said some of the Blueway Trails currently in conversation, may make it into the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. He said his question is how the county can better manage these types of things.

Compton further discussed the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Office of Greenways and Trails, trail opportunity mapping. He said with both of these there are a series of water based trails and land based trails. Compton said it is important to be aware of the meeting dates in order to have a voice at the table.

Holley said he will get involved and advocate that the TDC staff be included in the distribution of the meeting notices.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting adjourned.